Dear Howard, 4/9/78

I was delighted to hear from you last night. (Lil was busy with her hands in wet chicken and our guests.) She also is pleased that you will soon be near us and that we will be seeing you with some regularity. I know Jim will be and that he'll welcome all the help for which you can find time. He is doing great things and will soon be getting some return from them, aside from what neither of us ever mentions, the considerable satisfaction that comes from accomplishing the worthwhile.

I'll be including the Williams brief because Lil is copying it now. She'll be going to a concert shortly with Eleanor Harper. I guess you remember her- wife of the editor of the local evening paper.

We had a very pleasant evening with these news friends, originally from near Wilmington, later Swarthmore. He has been a fan of mine for some years. We had lived in England and tried to interest a friend at Penguin in Post Mortem. He shnaged jobs, to an engineering company near Rockville. When he went for the interview he stopped off here on his return home. I suggested a convenient Frederick neighborhood and lo! when they looked after he got the job, they found an old town house just to their liking in the neighborhood to which I directed them. And they are quite happy with it. The woman does not drive, so in the downtown area she can walk for all the family needs. If you remember the old-fashioned grocery to which we used to go, the one with the bakey, she says it is the best she's ever used.

Lil decided to have a more abundant dinner than has been our recent fare and to invite them. They were here for almost six hours, and it was pleasant. They also brough me a bottle of Scotch - and I'd just emptied the one I had. Even their timing was pleasing because I'd forgotten to replace it.

You know Lil's cooking. She also got a boughten cake, at that place, and even it was superb. First cake to walk into the house except in the hands of a guest for so MANY years, too.

Yesterday afternoon I began to recover some of whatever I'd lost and to be less weary so having congenial company could not have come at a better time.

I'd begun to make an asparagus bed. Today I had three short bursts of digging and shovelling and I've got a dozen of the roots planted. I expect to complete that job tomorrow. When I have this kind of exertion I feel some but not great discomfort near the shoulder-blades. It is a bit disconcerting. But I'll be keeping at some kind of exercise to see if that improves it.

Your and Jim's readings of the sort-of remand in No. 77-1831 are a bit more conservative than mine. We'll know before long - and before long will have a reading on Robinson's interpretation. However much or little it is a victory. I think it may become a major one. I told you all I know of Jim's plans, as farm as he's had time to think abiut any of this.

Right now he's terribly overloaded.

We have the same kind of situation in the spectro case. He's asked for a time extension.

Thanks very much for calling.

Best,